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Title: Arcane Magus [1]

Author: Lord Rune Artisem  
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\*this volume bears a  
book plate showing it  
was once part of a  
collection from the city  
of Caina\*

Most children in Sosaria  
grow up knowing and  
loving their beloved  
parents. A very few grow  
up hating their parents. I,  
on the other hand, had  
no parents to raise me.  
My parents, as I am told,  
were a nobleman of Lord  
British's court and a slut  
on the streets of  
Vesper. When it grew  
time for my birth, my  
father was far away in  
Britain unaware for what  
was going on. As for my  
mother... well needless to  
say that only one of us  
survived my birth. I grew  
up in the slums of  
Vesper with a few other  
abandoned children and we  
took care of our own. It  
was then that a strange  
man appeared. He dressed  
like a mage, but acted  
completely different from  
your typical mage, for he  
treated us, riff-raff  
abandoned children, like  
equals. He told us that  
he was a very wealthy  
man who lived on the  
island of Moonglow and  
that he had need of  
servants in his tower. He  
told us that if we would  
go with him he would  
make sure we would  
be taken care of, as long  
as we remained in his  
service.

Needless to say, we all agreed. The mage introduced himself as Monric, a former member of the Council of Moonglow. Monric had fashioned a ship the size of which I had never seen in my entire life to take us to Moonglow. He had a few servants on his ship that seemed quite nervous whenever he was around. One servant even went as far as to put his hand on my head and say "May the Virtues protect thee" when Monric was away on another part of the ship.

We all thought the servants to be stupid slobs, for Monric was as polite and kind as anyone we had ever seen. How wrong we would be... After arriving in Moonglow, we had a full escort in traveling to Monric's tower. What I found strange about the escort was that the men escorting us were not that of the city guards, but knights clad in armor as dark as night. Not one of them spoke a word, not even to Monric. He would give his command, and they would obey.

When we arrived at the tower, all of the knights stopped and did not make the slightest move. We entered the tower and saw most wonderful things. Ancient relics, rare trophies, even a sample of the legendary Blackrock reagent. But the house reeked a horrible smell... the smell of death... We were motioned to a rather large room with a few

cots on them. Monric explained that this would be our room and if he needed us then he would speak through the communication crystal that was placed on a small table. He also warned us that under no circumstance were we allowed to wander the upper levels of his tower.

Weeks passed, and not once did Monric give us one command. Finally, after being in the tower for months now, Monric issued a command. He asked Ben (the rude bully of our group) to come to his study on the top level. Ben rudely replied that he did not know where Monric's study was. Monric politely responded that the gentlemen outside our room would escort Ben to Monric's study. Ben opened the door and saw two of the dark clad knights standing outside. However, something was much different this time, for most of the children screamed in horror. The knights were not wearing helmets this time, allowing us to see their rotting heads... Ben quickly ran into the back of the room, trying to hide under one of the cots.

One of the undead knights went after him, picking the cot up and smashing it upon the wall as if it was glass. He then grabbed Ben by the head and proceeded out of the room. We never saw Ben again after this. This event repeated over and over during a time period of three years. I

then knew it was my  
turn, for I was the last  
one left.

One day, Monric made his  
command for me to come  
to his study. Full of  
fear, I accepted my  
master's command.  
However, it was to my  
surprise that when I  
opened the door I did not  
see the dark knights, but  
Monric himself. He smiled  
and said to me "At last,  
my experiment for the  
last three years shall  
come to an end tonight.  
You are the lucky one,  
Rune..." He grabbed my  
hand and escorted me to  
his study. There I saw a  
huge stone altar that  
was covered with the  
bodies of the dead. The  
walls of this room were  
lined with shelves that  
contained ancient spell  
books. "You are thinking  
that I am going to slay  
you right here, right now,  
aren't you?" Monric asked  
me.

I replied, "That would be  
my thoughts, master."  
Monric smiled. "That is  
not the case tonight,  
Rune... What I have been  
doing for the last three  
years is preparing for my  
own death. By day break  
tomorrow I will be dead,  
slain by the Order  
Knights of Lord British."  
"How do you know this?  
And if that is the case  
then why do you not  
flee?"

"To answer those  
questions, I must explain  
my whole past to you... I  
come from a long line of  
mages that have served  
the city of Moonglow  
since before the coming  
of Mondain. Growing up

for me was utterly  
boring and I found little  
pleasure to be in the  
services of the city. It  
was during one of my  
routine trips to the  
Lycaeum that I stumbled  
upon a book titled 'Vars  
Oros Necroism'. This book  
showed me the arts of a  
form of magic I never  
knew existed. The power  
over the living and the  
dead... Necromancy... I  
studied this art in  
secret, for if found I  
faced death. Over time, I  
had become very familiar  
with this art. Many a  
times, I would slay a  
peasant or street scum  
just to see what secrets  
I could unlock through  
necromancy. It was during  
my career on the  
Moonglow Council that my  
fate was revealed to  
myself. We had just  
given the order to  
execute this mad witch  
from Moonglow. She had  
made quite a few  
annoyances, the worst  
was opening a gate to  
Hythloth in which daemons  
escaped from and killed  
quite a few people. She  
was brought before us,  
for we had made the  
preparations of a small  
trial. She ranted and  
raved, telling us each  
how we would meet with  
horrible deaths. Her rants  
were ignored and by night  
time, she was dead. A  
week later, I suffered a  
dream in which the old  
witch appeared telling me  
that for my crimes that  
I would die at the hands  
of the Order Knights of  
Lord British for  
experimenting with  
necromancy. She also  
mentioned a date... Of  
course, I thought this to  
be nothing more than a

bad dream. However, I learned in time that each member of the council also had a similar, yet different dream. I found this strange, and pushed it into the back of my mind. Thirty years passed after that. I had been living in this tower, focusing more than ever on the art of necromancy. It was then that a messenger arrived informing me about the death of a former council member. I met with my old comrades, and noticed an unusual amount of fear in them. The member that had died, did so as the witch told him so some thirty years prior. During the next two years, many deaths of the former council members occurred, as the witch had said. For the first time, I was fearful of the future. Not at the fact that I would be dead, but at the fact that all my knowledge and work on necromancy would be lost. To prevent this, I began research on a ritual in which my knowledge may live on... That ritual will now conclude itself tonight." Monric said.

He paused for a bit and then motioned me towards a small flask. "This is the end result of my ritual. And you my boy, you are very lucky... Very lucky indeed... For when you drink this potion you will gain my knowledge... my memories... and my power." Monric said. "How? Why me?" I asked in amazement. "Do you not hate Lord British and his government?" "Yes," I replied. "Do you not feel that the people

of this realm are weak and disgusting?" "Yes," I replied. Monric smiled. "Very rare is there a child such as you. This flask contains a necromantic potion mixed with the blood of your slain friends." With saying that, Monric took a knife and slashed his own arm. I then saw him pour his own blood into the potion. He then muttered some magic words and the potion began to glow an eerie green. "It is complete. Take this potion and drink it. Your current memory shall remain intact, but it shall be that of a bad dream." With saying that he handed me the potion, but failed to release it. It was then that he said with a cold voice "Seek out the Order of the Ebon Skull... They will help you realize your true power and purpose... With saying that, I nervously drank the potion. After drinking the vile tasting substance, I felt the same. No change had happened. Seeing the surprised look on my face, Monric smirked and said "The potion shall not take effect until after my death. It is now time that you go... The Order Knights shall be here soon, and this entire tower shall be burnt to the ground. I have made arrangements for you to stay at The Scholar's Inn. Go there and sleep, for when you awake you will be changed." Before I could do or say anything, Monric had opened a magical gate and pushed me in.

\*\*\*continued in volume  
two\*\*\*